

Theme: Jesus is in the boat with us!

CHILDREN’S SERMON with a RE-ENACTMENT¹

Good morning. I’m so glad you’re here today.

I have a question for you. Do any of you think you have magic powers and could make these lights go off just by thinking about it? Let’s try it. Now think hard. Concentrate. (*Encourage the group to try by concentrating hard*). See if you can get the lights to turn off. (*Allow some space for this to happen.*)

Hmm – guess you don’t have any magic powers do you?

Let’s see if I can do it. . . . “Light, go off!!” (*Pre-arranged with ushers so the lights go off with my command. Wait for the reaction.*)

(*Then after a pause . . .*) “Lights on!!” (*Ushers turn the lights back on.*)

How about that? Did that surprise you? (*Let them answer*). Did it scare you a little bit? (*Let them respond.*) Well, I have to admit I had the ushers help me. I don’t have any special powers either. But Jesus did. And today’s gospel story tells about a time when Jesus used his power to do something none of his disciples could do.

Story Re-enactment

Let’s pretend that we’re in the boat with Jesus. (*Select a volunteer to be Jesus. Place people in an imaginary boat going down the center aisle as if sailing out of the church with Jesus in the stern.*)

Now to retell this story we have to get ready, so we’re going to practice some parts (*have everyone practice the following directions so they can participate while the story is told again.*)

- A. **WIND** – everyone makes “wind” noise;
- B. **WAVES** – the boat **ROCKS**, tossed when the waves get big – children lean from side to side;
- C. **ROW** the boat – everyone makes rowing motions;
- D. **BAIL** water; everyone cups their hands as if throwing water out of the boat.

Now we can **TELL THE STORY** and everyone (children and adults) can act out the parts.

The Story

Now Jesus and his disciples decided to go out in a boat and cross to the other side of a big lake. So the disciples got in the boat and started **ROWING** (*everyone makes rowing motions*). But

¹From: *Augsburg Sermons for Children, Gospels, Series B* (Minneapolis: Augsburg, 1993), 81-82.

Jesus was very tired, so he got in the back of the boat and fell fast asleep (*volunteer lies down behind other children*).

But as the disciples **ROWED** along, suddenly a great **WIND** began to blow (*congregation makes wind noise*). The **WIND** made the **WAVES** rough, and the boat began to rock. Oh no! Water is coming into the boat! We'd better **BAIL**! (*The children do motions for bailing water out of the boat.*) But the **WIND** blew very hard and the **WAVES** got even bigger. The disciples were very scared! They were afraid the boat would tip over and sink. The **WIND** blew even harder. **BAIL** faster!! Oh dear! What should we do? Can we call the coast guard for help? Should we try swimming for shore? No! We're too far out!! What should we do? (*Solicit suggestions from children.*)

Somebody wake up Jesus (*a volunteer goes to the person playing Jesus*). Wake up Jesus and tell him we're in trouble. Say, "**Don't you care that we are drowning?**"

But how did Jesus act? He wasn't scared. He got up and said, "**WIND, BE QUIET!**" (*Jesus says this. The wind dies down.*) He said, "**WAVES: PEACE, BE STILL!**" (*Jesus says this. The boat stops rocking.*) Then he said to his disciples, "*Why are you afraid? I've been right here with you all along.*"

Well, how do you think the disciples felt now? Maybe relief that Jesus had stopped the wind and waves. But maybe a little scared, too. Think how you felt when I turned off the light. Weren't you amazed? Well that's how the disciples felt; they were amazed that Jesus could stop the storm! And they asked each other, "**Who then is this, that even the wind and the sea obey him?**"

Thank you for helping me tell this story because it's a wonderful story. It reminds us that the same Jesus who saved the disciples in the boat is also with us, even when we're frightened or in trouble.

Prayer: Heavenly Father, we thank you for those times when you calm the storms that come up in our daily lives. We also thank you for those times when you give us peace even though we are in the middle of a storm. We ask you to watch over us and keep us safe. In Jesus' name we pray. Amen.

(*Children return to their seats.*)